Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A1

The present document is somewhat related to the copending and commonly assigned patent application document "MEASURED VIA HOLE ETCHING ~~VIA HOLE ETCH MONITORING~~", Docket number AFD 00550, Serial Number 10/034,747 ~~09/xxx,xxx~~ filed of even date herewith. The contents of this related, even filing date application, are hereby incorporated by reference herein.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 7, with the following two rewritten paragraphs:

A2

As shown in the FIG. 2 drawing the line 212 may now be understood to represent an endwise portion of the wafer backside grid pattern 402 as well as the encircling ring 400 both of which appear in the FIG. 4 drawing. In the FIG. 2 drawing the thickness extent of the remaining substrate material is indicated at 208 and the thickness of the substrate and the transistor active region is indicated at 202. As represented by these thickness dimensions one aspect of the present invention involves the preferred termination of the backside etching and thinning process when the etching has traveled from the lower surface of the wafer at 214 and reached the lower surface of the via hole metallization at 216. In fact it is contemplated that termination of the backside etching should occur precisely when the etching process has reached the via hole metallization represented at 216 or after an appropriate and equivalent etching-accomplished time interval when the etch rate and the etch depth are each known with accuracy. With this termination the exposed lower surface of the via hole metallization at 216 is available for making connection with the ground plane metallization in the manner shown at 312 in the FIG. 3 drawing.

Although etching termination upon reaching the via hole metallization is desirable in the invention it is not a requirement and indeed other etching terminations are feasible. These terminations may include etch stopping prior to reaching the via hole metal or etch stopping after reaching the via hole metal so that a wafer thickness less than the via hole metal depth is realized. The vernier etch depth markers of the copending U.S. Patent application of several of our inventor colleagues and inventors common with the present patent document, U.S. application serial number 10/034,747 ~~09/xxx,xxx~~, applicants' docket number AFD 00550 titled "MEASURED VIA HOLE ETCHING" may be used in controlling the etching depth achieved. The contents of this copending patent application are hereby incorporated by reference herein.